April 23, 2013. CASINO DEBATE.

Good Evening Mr. Mayor and Council; Ladies and Gentlemen

My name is Ginny Quinn, I live in Kitchener. And as you will gather , my reaction to a casino anywhere in Waterloo Region is totally **negative**. Back in 1997, while this whole community was fighting desperately to save one of our 2 acute care hospitals,( St. Mary’s) , from closure (to save health care dollars) the Conservative government had tried to ”gift us” with a Casino. I had attended one of the mayoral and leaders meetings.

It was agreed by those leaders , that they would have a meeting of the minds; and an agreement was made by **all** of them**; you** don’t allow it and **we** won’t allow it. If memory serves me correctly, they even brought Guelph into it. **They stood together**. So Elora (not in The Region) hosted it.

Now, we have one of the mayors and 3 of his 4 councillors in Woolwich **breaking rank .** The pittance of money offered back, compared to the potential probable amount taken out of this community seems to have drawn those 4 decision makers into a state of disillusion.

Also, Elora is aging and too small, and, isn’t raking in enough of folks hard earned money. Now the Liberal government by way of the OLG, wants a bigger one here in this Hi Tech community which gets compared more and more often to “The Silicone Valley”. Do we really NEED this Casino which would be an ‘insult to the Intelligence ‘ of the companies and minds and leading Educational Universities and Colleges located and others relocating here in these communities ? NO!

We already have many and varied “Tourist Attractions” bringing thousands and thousands of visitors and strangers to this community: **the Bingeman Entertainment Centre** has been doing this for years. **Oktoberfest** is a major draw. In itself, it brings over 100,000 visitors every fall. The **Maple Syrup Festival** , (70 TO 80,000 in one day.) The **Quilt Festival** , The **Waterloo Jazz Festival,** the **Kitchener Blues Festival,** the **Multicultural Festivals** the **St. Jacob’s Farmers Market** (many many thousands ) and many more attractions . I am told we currently have about 10,000 new people immigrating to Waterloo Region, yearly.

We also have another possible problem; **our roundabouts** have many of our own local drivers still not trained sufficiently, and many new people and strangers will not have experienced **any** roundabouts.

Our local police budget is already one million over budget and will be much larger yet with all the overtime needed now and in the future.

We are setting ourselves up for **many** future problems (including the social ones) **The Canadian Press News** reports that already the border town’s properties (Windsor , Sault Ste Marie and Niagara Falls ) are worth far less **even as properties**, as well as income/outgo and are a losing proposition for the OLG. That’s only one of the main reasons they’re romancing us . This is an above average community with successful businesses and people here, and they want a big piece of **our** pie.

They offer us the temptation of a pittance of OUR OWN LOCAL money back as the carrot that will make us give in to our own greed. We might (for awhile ) have the idea that the newcomers will increase the food industry profits and the local stores...but if we carefully read the reports over the years we’ll see the denials of such a thing happening. Gamblers come to the casino to gamble not shop and dine out often. ) Then another casino in CLOSE territory will also open and deprive the area of some of the potential players/donors to the governments cause.

Our Mayor, Carl Zehr, is quoted in the KW Record on May 24th 2012 “I would not be supportive of a casino within the city of Kitchener , however I would not stand in the way of a public discussion if there was a desire to do so.” Then he continued with a further quote ( which made me very proud and eager to back him up) “My current position is I do not think it would add value to our community.”

Mr. Mayor, you were right then and I hope that you now still hold that truthful view of it ‘not adding value to our community.’

I haven’t spoken to more than a very few people who want it...some who don’t care but most who say “No, let’s do whatever we can to stop it .” It will NOT add value to our community. Please do not support this casino in any way.

Respectfully submitted

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